



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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2010 Cooling Assistance Applications Now Being Accepted

Aid Available for Those Facing Economic Hardship

Richmond – When temperatures and humidity soar, staying cool is not a luxury, but a necessity for health, safety and quality of life. Aid is available to help Virginia’s low-income families and most vulnerable individuals stay safe in sweltering heat. Now through Monday, August 16, [local departments of social services](#) throughout the Commonwealth are accepting cooling assistance applications as part of the Virginia Department of Social Services’ (VDSS) Energy Assistance Program.

“We know that seasonal spikes in utility costs can cause a significant economic strain on vulnerable households,” said VDSS Commissioner Martin Brown. “For many Virginians, the repair of an air-conditioning unit or purchase of a ceiling fan, are out of reach without the cooling assistance supplement.”

Assistance is available to households that include a child under age six, a disabled individual or an adult age 60 or over who meet income and eligibility requirements.

Cooling assistance can be used to assist families and individuals with:

- payment of electric bills up to \$100 to operate cooling equipment;
- payment of security deposits for electricity to operate cooling equipment;
- repair of a central air conditioning system or heat pump;
- purchase of a whole-house fan, including ceiling or attic fans; and
- purchase and installation of one window unit air conditioner for households without a working one.

To qualify for cooling assistance, the maximum gross monthly income for a one-person household is \$1,174 before taxes and \$2,389 for a household of four. Assistance is available until funds are depleted.

The Energy Assistance Program is funded by the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program block grant. The cooling assistance component served nearly 70,000 Virginia households last year.

To learn more visit <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/ea/cooling/index.cgi>. Families and individuals must apply at their local department of social services by August 16, 2010.

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